

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 10774

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, JA

SUBJECT: SENATOR MANSFIELD'S CONVERSATION WITH FINANCE MINISTER
OHIRA

REF: TOKYO 10553, 10698

1. SUMMARY: NOTHING NOTEWORTHY EMERGED FROM 30 MINUTE
CONVERSATION BETWEEN FINANCE MINISTER OHIRA AND SENATOR
MANSFIELD. THEY TOUCHED ON JAPAN'S PETROLEUM IMPORTS, TRADE
WITH ASIA, LOCKHEED, SECURITY TREATY AND JAPANESE FOREIGN
AID. END SUMMARY.

2. SENATOR MANSFIELD, ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR HODGSON,
AIDES VALEO AND JONES, EMIN BUTTON, CALLED ON FINANCE
MINISTER OHIRA JULY 15. THE CALL LASTED 30 MINUTES, A
LARGE PART OF WHICH TIME WAS SPENT WITH OHIRA'S AIDES
PROCURING STATISTICS SO THAT OHIRA COULD RESPOND TO SENATOR
MANSFIELD'S QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW JAPAN MEETS ITS ENERGY NEEDS
AND CARRIES OUT TRADE WITH SOUTH KOREA, NORTH KOREA AND
SOVIET UNION. RESPONSES WERE PURELY FACTUAL.

3. SENATOR ASKED OHIRA WHAT EFFECT LOCKHEED SCANDAL
WOULD HAVE ON US-JAPAN RELATIONS. OHIRA RESPONDED THAT
ANSWER DEPENDS ON HOW THE SUBJECT IS HANDLED. IF IT IS
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HANDLED WISELY THERE WILL BE NO EFFECT ON PRESENT GOOD

RELATIONS. OPPOSITION AND MUCH OF THE MEDIA ARE NOW HANDLING THE ISSUE OUT OF ALL PROPORTION TO ITS SIGNIFICANCE BUT THE DUST WILL SOON SETTLE. SENATOR ASKED WHETHER IT WOULD BE WELL FOR THE UNITED NATIONS TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO PREVENT FUTURE OCCURENCES OF SUCH SITUATIONS, PERHAPS THROUGH INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT. OHIRA SEEMED TO JUMP AT THIS SUGGESTION, SAYING THAT THE UNITED NATIONS COULD BE EFFECTIVE SINCE MNC'S CANNOT REALLY BE CONTROLLED BY NATIONAL LEGISLATURES.

4. SENATOR ASKED WHAT WAS THE STATE OF JAPAN'S CONFIDENCE IN THE UTILITY OF THE US-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY. OHIRA PROMPTLY ASKED WHETHER HE MEANT CONFIDENCE OF GOVERNMENT OR JAPANESE PEOPLE: MANSFIELD PROMPTLY SAID HE MEANT BOTH. OHIRA THEN RESPONDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS CONVINCED THAT, FOR SMALL COST, TREATY GIVES A MAJOR BENEFICIAL EFFECT TO JAPAN. MANY ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE, HOWEVER, DO NOT EXACTLY UNDERSTAND THE BENEFITS OF THE TREATY. THESE ELEMENTS TEND TO DISTRUST THE GOVERNMENT, THEREFORE FUTURE OF THE TREATY DEPENDS ON HAVING STRONG AND STABLE JAPANESE GOVERNMENTS. MANSFIELD NOTED THAT THE JAPANESE PEOPLE CAN SEE THE US BASES ON THEIR TERRITORY AND ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOME REDUCTION OF THE NUMBER OF BASES NOW THAT 30 YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE END OF THE WAR. OHIRA RESPONDED THAT THIS IS BASICALLY FOR MILITARY JUDGMENT BUT THAT AS A MILITARY AMATEUR HE THOUGHT THAT BASES COULD BE CONSOLIDATED WITHOUT ANY UNDERMINING OF THEIR FUNCTIONAL CAPABILITY. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS PROCESS WAS NOW TAKING PLACE, ESPECIALLY ON OKINAWA. SENATOR ASKED WHETHER SIMILAR MEASURES WERE POSSIBLE ON THE MAIN ISLANDS. OHIRA RESPONDED THAT HE THOUGHT THAT WAS ALSO TAKING PLACE.

4. IN REGARD TO SENATOR'S QUESTIONS ABOUT JAPANESE INTENTIONS REGARDING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO LDC'S, OHIRA NOTED JAPANESE HAVE EXTENSIVE PROGRAM CONCENTRATING ON SOUTHEAST ASIA WITH SOME ATTENTION TO LATIN AMERICA AND MIDDLE EAST AND LESS TO AFRICA. SENATOR ASKED WHETHER PROGRAM TOWARDS MIDDLE EAST WAS BASED UPON JAPANESE DESIRE TO ASSURE FLOW OF PETROLEUM. OHIRA RESPONDED THAT RELATIONS

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WERE GOOD WITH THE MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES. AMBASSADOR INQUIRED WHETHER HIS REMARKS ALSO CONVERED ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT. OHIRA SAID JAPAN HAD GIVEN SUBSTANTIVE ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT.
HODGSON

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